

most important lessons—the value of team work. Basketball, like all sports, teaches us the value of sportsmanship, camaraderie, practice, and commitment to excellence. These are skills which will serve these young people well as they begin to make a difference in the world. I am proud to extend my sincere congratulations and very best wishes to them all as they begin the tournament.

I would be remiss if I did not extend a special note of thanks to the many volunteers who so generously donate their time and energy to making this event possible. Coaches, parents, faculty, administrators, and friends all play important roles in bringing the St. Mary Invitational to life. Without your dedication, commitment, and energies, we would not be able to share this very special event with our young people. The fact that many of the adults who today volunteer their time to the tournament were once players themselves is testament to the legacy of this special event.

In its thirty-year history, the St. Mary Invitational has touched the lives of over fifteen thousand young people across Connecticut. It is with my deepest thanks and sincerest appreciation that I rise today to join the many well-wishers in extending my heart-felt congratulations to the St. Mary School Parochial Invitational Basketball Tournament on their 30th Anniversary. You have made such a difference in the lives of so many and I know that you will continue to leave an indelible mark on our community.

LET FREEDOM RING

HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 8, 2004

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, today my colleague from the 3rd district of California, the Honorable DOUG OSE and I ask all our colleagues to join us in a special commemoration of the tragic events of September 11, 2001. On September 11, 2004, as part of the "Let Freedom Ring—Bells Across America" remembrance, participating churches across the nation will, beginning at noon, toll four bells at one-minute intervals to honor those who perished on the four hijacked commercial aircrafts on September 11, 2001. On the fifth minute, a chorus of bells will be played to recognize and pay tribute to the countless people whose lives were greatly affected by the events of 9/11. As the churches of the Sacramento Region join together to remember one of the most tragic days in our nation's history, we ask all our colleagues to join us in the "Let Freedom Ring—Bells Across America" remembrance.

The "Let Freedom Ring—Bells Across America" remembrance is the brainchild of Mr. Stu Varner, a resident of the Sacramento Region. Like millions of his fellow Americans, Mr. Varner was greatly affected by the catastrophic series of attacks that occurred at New York City, the Pentagon, and Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Mr. Varner held a deep conviction that those who lost their lives on 9/11 should never be forgotten, and that they should be properly recognized as heroes. Mr. Varner believed that September 11 should be a day of somber and serious reflection much like Memorial Day and Veterans Day. As a re-

sult, Mr. Varner developed the idea of the "Let Freedom Ring—Bells Across America" remembrance. Mr. Varner wishes that the synchroscopic ringing of bells by churches across America will help create a wave of remembrance for the thousands who lost their lives and the many more whose lives were drastically affected as a result of 9/11.

Mr. Speaker, as the churches of the Sacramento Region participate in the "Let Freedom Ring—Bells Across America" remembrance, my colleague Mr. DOUG OSE and I are honored to pay our respect and tribute to the innocent people whose lives were prematurely cut short or greatly altered by the 9/11 tragedy. We ask our colleagues to join us in remembering the tragic events of September 11, 2001 by participating in the "Let Freedom Ring—Bells Across America" remembrance.

TRIBUTE TO LAKE FENTON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 8, 2004

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to bring to your attention an event that took place in my district. On Saturday, August 21, 2004 the Lake Fenton Community School district gathered to mark the official ribbon cutting and formal dedication of their newly constructed Lake Fenton High School. The celebration concluded on Sunday, August 22, 2004 with a non-denominational service and community open house.

Lake Fenton High School was first dedicated on May 19, 1961. With increasing enrollment and changing educational needs the Lake Fenton Board of Education and the Lake Fenton Schools Support Services/Facilities Committee implemented plans to build a new high school. Their hard work and dedication resulted in three elective bond activities, and the final product is the first newly built facility within the Lake Fenton School district and the only new high school constructed within Genesee County in over 30 years. This is indeed an accomplishment worth commending.

The new high school boasts state of the art technology, computer and science labs, a media center, auditorium, gymnasium, and an outdoor athletic facility. The labs will allow the school to fully support their new program entitled "Project Lead the Way". This program introduces students to the demanding field of Engineering and Digital Electronics. As stated by their Principal, Julie Clontz, Lake Fenton High School is trying to in every way possible to adjust their curriculum to meet the needs of the students and help prepare them for life after high school. The completion of this beautiful new facility and the implementation of these exciting educational programs is without a doubt a step in the right direction. Superintendent Ralph Coaster has provided excellent leadership in this endeavor.

Mr. Speaker, as a Member of Congress, I consider it both my duty and privilege to work to improve the quality of our public school system. I am glad that communities such as Lake Fenton share this sentiment. They continue to work diligently to ensure students have the tools necessary to compete and succeed. I ask my colleagues of the 108th Congress to

please join me in congratulating this fine community and its school district and in wishing them the very best in future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO ALAMEDA HIGH SCHOOL VALEDICTORIAN BEN HOFFMAN

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 8, 2004

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Alameda High School Valedictorian, Ben Hoffman. Ben, a resident of Alameda, California, did not use notes or index cards when he spoke with rhyme and rhythm to his fellow classmates during the graduation ceremonies for the Alameda High School Class of 2004. His remarks were met with a standing ovation.

Ben's Valedictory Address, entitled "Responsibility" is an outstanding commentary about the challenges and opportunities facing the youth of today. He shared with his graduating class, remembrances of the past four years, looked at the injustice and violence in today's world and urged his classmates to make the world a better place in the future.

RESPONSIBILITY

(By Benjamin Hoffman)

A lot of people look at graduation, and say that it will give us many new opportunities,

I think its more than that, I think it gives us many new responsibilities

We live in a world where people of different nations

Face starvation, extermination
Exploitation, or discrimination
Based solely on race, religion or sexual orientation

These are the problems that we are facing
Perpetuated by a lack of education
But here we are at our graduation.

For the past four years in this community

We've had a unique opportunity

To get a chance to truly see

The value of growing up in unity

And it'll just take a sec

If we take time to reflect

Bout the great affect

How we learned to connect

Protect and respect everyone we met

Without expecting to collect

And all of this in an atmosphere

That provided not a thing for us to fear

And I'm being sincere when I say I hold dear

The value and promise of these past four years

And now we have a responsibility

Because of our recent history

To promote an end to slavery

And poverty, and adversity

Wherever it may be

Until the world is free.

Free from the confines that define

The lives that so many people are resigned

To be living, without giving

Any hope that mankind is not blind

But much of mankind is blind to the suffering that exists

And our first obstacle is going to be to conquer ignorance.

But we got to start at home

Gotta conquer our own

Before our true potential can finally be shown

Its been so easy to get caught up in only thinking

About doing drugs or drinking,